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Smith was acquainted with a woman from New Jersey who claimed to be a witch, state police said. The woman and her husband and three children were in Lobelia on Monday and left early Friday.

Painter said a search of Smith's belongings uncovered correspondence between Smith and the New Jersey woman. The woman reportedly came to West Virginia to try to buy some property, but left when the deal didn't go through.

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Police quoted a neighbor of Hauer's that there was some kind of ritual nearby at 12:45 a.m. Monday at the rising of a new moon.

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Sgt. Painter quoted neighbors that Hauer was so meek he would seek the help of others to dispose of wounded animals.

Cpl. Dyer said about 30 National Guardsmen, 10 conservation officers and a group of spelunkers from Lewisburg are still going over the ground around Hillsboro in search of some clue to Hauer's whereabouts.

The area is dotted with worked out saltpeter caves that Hauer spent much of his time mapping and studying.

By James A. Hill
Staff Writer

The note left behind by suspected murderer Peter M. Hauer is causing wide speculation about a motive for the slaying of 18-year-old Walter Smith of Follansbee.

Besides disclosing where the body of the West Virginia University student could be found, the note said in part:

"He just came to the wrong place at the wrong time. . . It was my mental condition."

His reference to his mental condition is what is intriguing investigators the most.

According to at least one acquaintance of Hauer's, the native of Lebanon, Pa., is

known to have been a sometime user of LSD.

IN VIEW OF THIS, authorities are wondering if Hauer was "tripped out" when Smith was shot three times in the head and neck on or about June 4.

Smith, a summer worker at Watoga State Park, was seen leaving the park on his bicycle that day for a trip to nearby Hillsboro. When he failed to return the following day, a minor search was initiated.

The search intensified as days continued to pass without any trace of Smith. A number of searchers knocked on the door of Hauer's rustic home at nearby Lobelia, but Hauer denied any knowledge of Smith's whereabouts.

On June 11, the search was joined by scores of National Guardsmen, state police reinforcements and a number of spelunkers. They were ordered to pay particular attention to the numberless, worked-out saltpeter caves that pitted the area.

Since it was widely known that Hauer had been making a study of the caves, searchers again knocked on his door. When the knock went unanswered, a member of the party entered the cluttered house. He immediately spotted the note on Hauer's desk.

AMONG OTHER THINGS, the note said Smith's body could be found in a cave behind Hauer's house. It also said Hauer intended to kill himself. It did not say where or when.

Reinforcements were called in and ordered to search every cave in the area. Spelunkers, equipped with scuba diving gear, even descended into deep pools of water that covered some of the cave bottoms.

Neighbors, who had grown used to seeing Hauer work his small garden daily beside his weathered home, reported that Hauer was last seen on the morning of June 9, two days before the discovery of the note and five days after Smith disappeared.

The murder warrant issued for Hauer's arrest accuses him of killing Smith by gunfire on or about June 4, the day of the victim's disappearance.

Investigators say it raises an obvious question. If Hauer did kill Smith on June 4, why did he wait until June 9 to write the note before disappearing himself? Had he been under the influence of a drug during the period, suddenly regained his senses and discovered the awful result of a "bad trip"? Was his suicide threat merely a ruse to throw investigators off his trail?

State Police Cpl. Bill Dyer is reluctant to discuss intimate details of the case for fear of prompting erroneous and prejudicial conclusions by the public.

"THIS IS ONE OF THE most mystifying cases I have ever had," Dyer says. "I just wish I knew more about this man I'm looking for. At this point, I don't even know whether he's dead or alive."

Dyer says samples of Hauer's writing leads him to believe he is a better than average student of the Civil War.

"Some of this stuff seems brilliant to me," he says.

His girl friend, Kathryn Agnew, a 22-year-old student nurse at Baltimore City Hospital, said Hauer attended Gettysburg College, site of the famous Civil War battle, to further his knowledge of the



Hauer leads a tour near the

Outdoor and Environmental Education Center at Harrisburg, Pa. Picture was taken in 1972.

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HILLSBORO — A Department of Natural Resources officer disclosed evidence today that indicates 18-year-old Walter Smith of Follansbee was killed during a ritual.

Kenneth Painter said Smith had been shot three times — once above each eye and once in the back of the head — and had been hanged.

Painter said a piece of rough hemp rope was tied around Smith's neck when his body was found Wednesday night in a cave and the mountain home of 30-year-old Peter M. Hauer of nearby Lobelia, Pocahontas County.

HAUER, WHO MOVED into the area several years ago after leaving a school job in York, Pa., is still being investigated.

A handwritten document found in the rustic house Wednesday led police to Smith's body. Police called it a "will and testament." The will, undated, in which the writer admits killing Smith, named several people who were to receive his possessions.

Painter believe the note was written by Hauer and it stated that he was going to commit suicide and his body could be found in a nearby cave.

However, some doubt now exists that it was written by Hauer. Another conservation officer said Hauer was meticulous in his written matter found in his home. The will was disjointed "with a lot of contradictions and contrasts to his normal

MEANWHILE, STATE POLICE said Ellen Snyder, Hauer's missing girl friend, has been located in Pittsburgh, Pa., and was returning to the Hillsboro area late Friday night. Police say she is not under suspicion.

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State Police Cpl. W. R. Dyer, who is inclined to downgrade any connection of witchcraft with the murder, said he is investigating a possibility that Smith had fallen in with some cult in the surrounding area.

Smith was acquainted with a woman from New Jersey who claimed to be a witch, state police said. The woman and her husband and three children were in Lobelia on Monday and left early Friday.

Painter said a search of Smith's belongings uncovered correspondence between Smith and the New Jersey woman. The woman reportedly came to West Virginia to try to buy some property, but left when the deal didn't go through.

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Smith, a summer worker at State Park, was seen leaving his bicycle that day for Hillsboro. When he failed to return the following day, a minor search was begun.

The search intensified to pass without any trace of Smith. A number of searchers knocked down Hauer's rustic home and Hauer denied any knowledge of Smith's whereabouts.

On June 11, the searchers called in scores of National Guard troops and police reinforcements and searchers. They were ordered to pay particular attention to the mountain salt-peter caves.

Since it was widely known Hauer had been making a search for salt-peter caves, searchers again knocked down Hauer's house. When the knock went down, the number of the party entering the house. He immediately searched Hauer's desk.

AMONG OTHER THINGS, the note said Smith's body could be found behind Hauer's house. It stated Hauer intended to kill himself, either before or when.

Reinforcements were ordered to search every cave. Spelunkers, equipped with gear, even descended into the water that covered some of the caves.

Neighbors, who had been seeing Hauer work in the woods beside his weathered house, said Hauer was last seen on June 9, two days before the note and five days before the body was discovered.

The murder warrant issued after Hauer's arrest accuses him of killing Smith on or about June 4, in connection with Smith's disappearance.

Investigators said they have a question. If Hauer was "tripped," why did he wait until after the note before disappearing? He had been under the influence of LSD during the period, suddenly disappeared and discovered the body "on a trip"? Was his purpose to throw investigators off the trail?

State Police Cpl. Dyer said he would like to discuss intimate details of Hauer's life to draw final conclusions.

"THIS IS ONE of the strangest cases I have ever investigated. I just wish I knew what I was looking for. At the moment, I don't know whether Hauer was sane or not."

Dyer says he has no leads that would lead him to believe Hauer was a deranged student.

"Some of the things he said to me," he says.

His girl friend, a 22-year-old student at City Hospital, said Hauer was at Lewisburg College, where he was in a battle, to fight



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old Peter M. Hauer of nearby Lobelia, Pocahontas County.

HAUER, WHO MOVED into the area about four years ago after leaving a school teaching job in York, Pa., is still being sought.

A typewritten document found in Hauer's rustic house Wednesday led searchers to Smith's body. Police called it a last "will and testament." The will, undated and in which the writer admits killing Smith, named several people who were to receive his possessions.

Police believe the note was written by Hauer and it stated that he was going to commit suicide and his body could be found in a nearby cave.

However, some doubt now exists that it was written by Hauer. Another conservation officer said Hauer was meticulous in all other written matter found in his home but the will was disjointed "with a lot of misspellings and contrasts to his normal style."

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Police Cpl. W. R. Dyer (on porch in

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SEARCH PARTY picks its way
through one of the many boulder-

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